



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

PSYCHIATRIC SECURITY REVIEW BOARD

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Ellen Lachance, Executive Director

Before the Judiciary Committee

March 5, 2012

Good afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Ellen Lachance, the Executive Director of the Psychiatric Security Review Board. I appear before you today to request the committee's support of **HB 5330 An Act Concerning Sexual Offender Registration Requirements for Certain Persons Granted Temporary Leave by the Psychiatric Security Review Board.**

The Board, composed of six members, appointed by the Governor for their expertise, has jurisdiction, as ordered by Superior Court, over all persons found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect. The Board orders the confinement and treatment of those individuals to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services or to the Department of Developmental Services.

The Board's statutory mission is the protection of society. There are currently 145 acquittees under the Board's jurisdiction and 21 are sex offenders. When appropriate, acquittees transition to the community through Board approved Temporary Leaves, followed by Conditional Release. On Temporary Leave, individuals may have access to the community in phases, ranging anywhere from a few hours to residing in the community overnight. While on Temporary Leave, treatment and oversight of the acquittee remains the responsibility of Connecticut Valley Hospital. Upon successful completion of Temporary Leave, acquittees progress to Conditional Release. On Conditional Release, the acquittee is discharged from Connecticut Valley Hospital and the responsibility for treatment and supervision shifts to community providers.

Sex offenders are not currently required to register with the Sex Offender Registry until they are granted Conditional Release status. Because individuals can spend overnights in the community on Temporary Leave, before they reach Conditional Release status, we believe acquittees should be required to register with the Sex Offender Registry as soon as they are permitted access to overnight stays. Initiating the registration process, while on Temporary Leave, will enhance public safety.

The Board has a significant role in safeguarding Connecticut's citizens, while at the same time, ensuring appropriate treatment services for those under its jurisdiction. The Committee's favorable action on the recommended change will ensure the Board's public safety mandate is extended to sex offenders on Temporary Leave status. I am happy to respond to any questions.